

**Terminology in European academic settings:
The case of course unit descriptions in native and lingua franca English**

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EU-wide efforts to consolidate the European Higher Education Area are translating into the need for universities from countries in which English is not an official language to communicate successfully in English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Among the key documents requiring drafting in, and/or translation into, English, the description of course units is crucial due to its informative/promotional function, its mix of disciplinary and educational/institutional terminology, and the strain it places on academics not necessarily well versed in English. The CODE project, currently under way at the Department of Interpreting and Translation (University of Bologna, Forlì), aims to explore the terminological and phraseological features of course catalogues from native English and ELF countries, evaluating their quality and standardization.

The aim of the paper is twofold. First, we introduce the pool of corpora developed within CODE: a) a parallel corpus of course descriptions in Italian and English published by the University of Bologna in 2013/2014 (~2.2 million tokens); b) a reference corpus of course descriptions published in native English countries (United Kingdom and Ireland; ~1 million tokens); c) a monolingual comparable ELF corpus representing Romance and Germanic language backgrounds, comprising universities based in Italy, Belgium/France and Austria/Germany (~500,000 tokens). Second, we present a case study in which these resources are used in a terminological task involving the revision and expansion of an Italian->English glossary compiled by the University of Bologna International Office. Focusing on the Italian terms “corso”, “modulo” and “insegnamento” with their equivalents, we propose a bootstrapping procedure that consists in validating the equivalents, finding collocates/phraseological patterns, and iteratively using these to isolate alternatives to the node(s), thus expanding and enriching the term set and its phraseology. We suggest that the joint use of native and ELF corpora is a methodological prerequisite given the inherently international nature of this domain.

References

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Short bio-sketches

Silvia Bernardini is associate professor of English Language and Translation (University of Bologna, Department of Interpreting and Translation, Forlì Campus). She has taught specialized translation and translation technology courses. Her research interests include corpus-based translation studies (of phraseology in particular), English as a Lingua Franca in institutional settings, construction and use of corpora for professional, pedagogic and research purposes.

Erika Dalan graduated in Specialized Translation from the School for Translators and Interpreters of the University of Bologna (Forlì Campus) in 2013. She currently holds a research contract from the Department of Interpreting and Translation (DIT) of the same University; research activities are aimed at developing methodologies and language resources for writing and translating into English as a Lingua Franca.

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Marcello Soffritti has been professor of German Linguistics at the Department of Interpreting and Translation (University of Bologna, Forlì Campus) since 1992. His projects and publications concern Language for Special Purposes, Lexicology, Multimedia Translation, Terminology and German Syntax.